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Winthrop University

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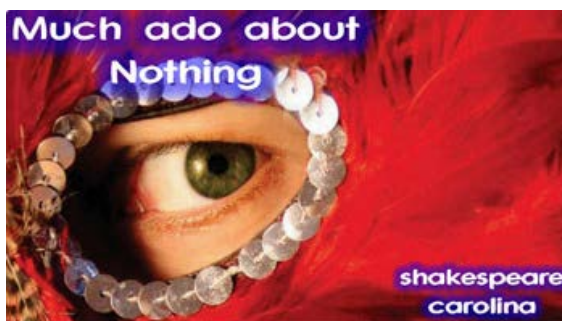
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"Much Ado About Nothing" Signals New Winthrop, Shakespeare Carolina Partnership

Quick Facts

- "Much Ado About Nothing" will mark a new partnership between Shakespeare Carolina and Winthrop University.
- Shakespeare Carolina and Winthrop's College of Visual and Performing Arts/Department of Theatre and Dance leadership will announce the partnership in a pre-show talk July 22.



ROCK HILL, S.C. - The July 22-24 production of Shakespeare's "**Much Ado About Nothing**" at Winthrop will kick off a strong partnership between the university's Department of Theatre and Dance and Shakespeare Carolina.

Beginning in summer 2011, **Winthrop** and **Shakespeare Carolina** will form a partnership to produce classical theatre in Rock Hill. The partnership, known as **Shakespeare Carolina at Winthrop**, will bring together the artistic

leadership of Shakespeare Carolina with the faculty and students of the **Department of Theatre and Dance**. The partnership will present two or three productions during the summer in Winthrop's **Johnson Theatre**. In addition, Shakespeare Carolina has amended its governance structure to include two representatives from Winthrop to serve on its board of directors.

Winthrop's new dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts, **David Wohl**, will join **Chris O'Neill**, Shakespeare Carolina's artistic director, and **Andrew Vorder Bruegge**, chair of Winthrop's Department of Theatre and Dance, will announce the arrangement opening night July 22 in a pre-show curtain speech (shows begin at 8 p.m. nightly). A reception, hosted by Theatre and Dance, will follow the show in the Johnson Theatre lobby.

Shakespeare Carolina at Winthrop will support **Shakespeare Carolina's** vision in several ways:

- CVPA's resources will enhance the artistic quality of the company's productions, with Johnson Theatre serving as **Shakespeare Carolina's** summer home. Involvement of Winthrop's faculty and students will enhance the artistic quality of the company's work.
- **Winthrop** will support actively the company's ambition to become a fully professional operation, hiring the region's best directors and choreographers, the most qualified designers in all areas and Equity-status guest actors.
- The partnership will support the company's plans to expand its repertory to include productions by other Elizabeth dramatists (Christopher Marlowe and Ben Jonson, for example) and classical works from ancient authors (Pautus, Aristophanes or Sophocles).

Winthrop's arts programming will reap its own benefits from the new working relationship:

- The partnership will provide professional artistic opportunities for Winthrop faculty during the summer.

Winthrop students will have a local opportunity to participate in intensive summer theatre experience – as actors, running crew technicians or as production staff. Students will be able to earn academic credit for their participation, and their academic experience will include elements such as master classes, reading, research and intensive training in classical performance techniques and applied learning through participation in Shakespeare Carolina's productions. Faculty members in Theatre and Dance will supervise students' involvement with the company.

- The Winthrop community will have local access to excellent summer theatre, and the partnership will bring the Rock Hill community a premiere summer entertainment series on campus.

Vorder Bruegge dubbed the new partnership "win-win" for all the involved parties and an excellent way to combine academic study with real-world classical theatre experience.

"This partnership was easy to create because it's win-win for Shakespeare Carolina, for Winthrop and for Rock Hill," said Vorder Bruegge. "The Shakespeare Carolina artistic staff will handle all production responsibilities; Winthrop provides a terrific venue for the productions and injects into the mix the energy, talents and enthusiasm of our faculty and students; and the Rock Hill audience just has to come out and enjoy it all."

In the future, **Shakespeare Carolina at Winthrop** will expand to include numerous initiatives, such as forming an apprentice company of high school students as a way to grow talent in the community; developing parallel early music and early dance programming alongside the theatre productions; and offering theatre classes (taught by Winthrop faculty/students who are members of Shakespeare Carolina at Winthrop) during the day for local K-12 students.

Available at <http://www.carolinatix.org>, tickets for "**Much Ado About Nothing**" are \$15 for adults and \$10 for students, seniors and active military. O'Neill touted the classical theatre company's production of the popular play as "a decidedly different take on the classic comedy, utilizing Shakespeare Carolina's particular style of physical comedy to produce a riot of sound, color and hilarity."

The production is partially funded by the Arts Council of York County Small Grants Program. The Rock Hill Tourism Commission, the John and Susan Bennett Memorial Arts Fund of the Coastal Community Foundation of S.C., the S.C. Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts provide funding for the grants program.

For more information about the "**Much Ado About Nothing**" production, visit the [news release](#).

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